

(Transcribed 4 April 1952)

The Ford Motor Company

MANAGEMENT DEVELOPMENT PROGRAM

"Coaching the Management Team"
(Film Strip and Record)

The President of our company often refers to the management team when he speaks of all us who have supervisory responsibilities. This is not an idle figure of speech. There is real meaning in that expression, "management team." For every manager

is much like a football coach in many respects. A manager is responsible not so much for what he does himself as for what other people do under his direction. Like the football coach,

every manager's success or failure depends on the performance of his team. Both manager and coach must plan, and guide, and direct, but the game is won or lost by the play on the field.

To build a winning management team and achieve our company objective, we have inaugurated a Management Development Program. We have started with the logical steps that a football coach would also take to build a championship team.

Just as the coach looks over his material at the beginning of the season, we have gathered personal histories to get a good picture of the experience and qualifications of the members of our team. Likewise,

just as the coach studies his plays and strategy to know the requirements of each position on the team, we have made out position descriptions to tell us the requirements of each management job. Now,

just as the coach must study and analyze the actual performance of the players on the field in order to capitalize on their strong points and remedy their weaknesses, just so with industry

we must analyze and appraise the performance of our subordinates in order to achieve the best results. In football coaching,

it is not enough to decide that a player is good or bad in general. The poor player might have just one weakness that the coach can remedy and develop the man into a star player. The good player might become much better if the coach detects the little faults that can be eliminated. Consequently,

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the coach analyzes the elements of the game - running, blocking, tackling, kicking, passing, etc. - and then studies how well each player performs each of those elements. To do this,

many coaches use some sort of a check-list as a reminder and a convenient record in appraising the performance of each player. In management,

we can also analyze the elements of the game and determine the factors of management performance that are required in all management positions. Such an analysis gives us a list

of twelve characteristics of management performance:

1. Knowledge of the work
2. Planning and organizing
3. Analytical ability
4. Judgment
5. Mental alertness
6. Initiative
7. Cooperation
8. Leadership
9. Development of men
10. Personality
11. Quantity of work
12. Quality of work

Our Management Development Program

provides us a check-list, like the coaches, where we can record our evaluation of a man's performance on each of these twelve items. This same form

provides spaces where we can sum up and interpret our evaluations in terms of the man's total performance of his job, and an extra page

provides for our evaluation of the man's potential in terms of his future possibilities as a member of management. In using these pages,

like the coach, we are appraising performance in order to improve performance. We are judging how well each man does his job for the sole purpose of helping him do a better job. In this process,

the coach's task is far easier than ours. Football performance can be observed directly on the field but management performance is not something we can see at a glance. Furthermore,

it's not hard to distinguish between blocking and tackling, between kicking and passing, but it's not so easy to make the distinction between the different elements of management performance. Nevertheless we must find out

how well our management team is doing and the performance appraisal is a tool to help us get the answer.

We must use it carefully and expertly in order to build a constantly better management team. To do this,

there are five guide posts that we can follow in this phase of the Management Development Program. The first of these

is to gauge performance by job requirements. In rating a man's knowledge of his work, for example, we will indicate that he has a thorough knowledge of his assignment, if he knows all he needs to know to do that job, even if he doesn't know anything else. In the same way,

his knowledge of the work may be inadequate for that particular job even though he is an encyclopedia of knowledge about other subjects. We must judge his performance in relation to the position he holds.

We must also be sure to appraise objectively. For each element of our appraisal there is a space for supporting evidence and we should be sure that we have facts as the basis for our evaluations and not off-hand impressions nor other people's opinions. To be objective,

we must also separate our personal feelings from our evaluations. No matter how much we may like a man or dislike him personally, we want to appraise what he does and not what he is. After all, it would be just as unfair to him to rate his performance too high as to rate it too low,

because a high rating would give both him and ourselves a false sense of security, while an objective rating would lead both of us to take constructive action to help him improve himself, which is the whole purpose of our appraisal in the first place. To appraise objectively, we must also be sure

to observe performance, so that we can go on our own direct knowledge and not buy what we read in the papers or what other people say. It's all too easy

to overlook good performance, in industry as on the football field, unless we make a point of observing performance on the job, looking for strong points as well as for weaknesses.

To analyze sharply is our fourth guide post to sound appraisal. We must be sure that we rate each element of performance separately and independently. When the coach rates a player on tackling he must be careful not to be influenced by how well the player blocks, or runs, or kicks. He must limit his judgment to the one element of tackling in spite of our natural tendency to rate a man high on each factor if we feel he is pretty good in general. And yet

some of the elements of management performance could be confused much more easily. For example, leadership and development of men are quite similar, yet are by no means the same. A man can be an excellent leader giving clear instruction in building high morale so that his people turn in a first-rate job, and yet be a failure in the development of men. Just because his leadership is so strong that he keeps subordinates dependent on him and fails to encourage them to develop themselves. We must be sure that our appraisal shows such differences wherever they exist in a man's actual performance. From this illustration we can see

why we must analyze sharply to make sure that we judge each aspect of management performance separately and independently as we observe and appraise the work of our subordinates.

To weigh thoroughly is the fifth guide post in our evaluation. We need to be sure we do not give undue weight to dramatic but isolated incidents. Just because a player misses the point after touchdown that would have won the game in the last half minute of the play, we don't want to forget the excellent kicking he did the rest of the afternoon.

Just because a man pulled a very obvious boner last week, we don't want to overlook the excellent judgment shown in his work for the past year. In short, we want to measure overall performance so we must weigh thoroughly and make sure we are not judging his work by single incidents that happened to come to our attention.

When we follow these five guide posts,

1. Gauge by job requirements
2. Appraise objectively
3. Observe performance
4. Analyze sharply
5. Weigh thoroughly

we will come to a sound appraisal of the man's performance in the twelve elements of his management job. So what?

Page 3 of the appraisal blank helps us answer that question. This is the place where we sum up and interpret the meaning of our evaluation: "Does he fill his present position adequately," or,

"Is he a square peg in a round hole?" "If the situation is not satisfactory in every way, what is being done about it, or what should be done?" Here is the place where we record, and interpret or explain, the individual peculiarities that are not covered by our check-list. When we have made out a performance appraisal

we can guard against unconscious mistakes and confirm our judgments by reviewing our evaluations of the performance of our subordinates with our organizational superior. He will be acquainted with the work and the people we are appraising so he will be able to observe any tendency we may have to be too harsh or too easy in our judgments. At the same time,

this review of our appraisals will give our superior a closer understanding of any personnel problems we may have and will give us an opportunity to obtain any advice he can offer. For these reasons,

the Management Development Program makes provision for our superior to review and concur in our appraisal of the performance of each of our subordinates.

Now, when we have weighed, measured and analyzed the management performance of our subordinate,

when the coach has compiled all possible statistics on his players,

we still haven't scored any touchdown or changed the figures on the score board. The best appraisals in the world are no good

unless we use them as the coach does to improve performance. We recognize that if the coach's best back is weak in passing

the coach cannot give him a stronger passing arm. All that the coach can do is to help the player improve his performance himself through plenty of practice at the right thing. The only way the coach can do this is

to secure the player's understanding of the appraisal and his cooperation in doing something about it. In industrial management,

we cannot pour judgment into a subordinate's head if our evaluation shows that quality is deficient in his performance. It is not practical for us

to provide the initiative externally when that element is rated low in our review of a man's performance.

As managers we must use our appraisals as tools to help us coach a winning management team. To do that,

we must let each of our subordinates know how we have evaluated his performance. That sounds pretty easy because there isn't one of us who doesn't want to know

"How am I doing?" And that's exactly what the appraisal of performance will tell. However,

if we just tell a man how we think he is doing and he is not doing so well in some respects,

he may not be stimulated to try to improve himself. On the other hand, if we simply tell him

his performance is good on his present job it's very likely that it will never get any better.

Neither of these results are what we want. Our purpose in appraising performance is to improve performance and build a winning management team. Our success in coaching

depends on how we discuss our appraisal of a subordinate's performance with him. This interview is a key point in the whole Management Development Program. Listen:

"Joe, I want you to take a couple minutes to go over your performance appraisal." That's a good way to make a bad start. Not time, no privacy, no preparation.

"Frank, can you clear an hour some time after lunch to come in and talk with me about your part in the Management Development Program?" That's more like it. Now, they'll both be able to arrange their work for a quiet, businesslike conference without an embarrassing audience.

What we say when our subordinate comes in for his appraisal interview will have to be determined by our own personality and our past relations with the individual. It would be foolish and futile to adopt an unnatural heartiness in our greeting or to put on an act of any kind but, in our own way, we want to be sure that we create a friendly, easy atmosphere.

For our first appraisal interview with any subordinate, it will be wise to review the whole purpose and outline of the Management Development Program to make sure he understands his personal interest in the program.

Before we come to the actual appraisal, let's make sure he appreciates the importance and the value of this review to him. We know

that our appraisal is a coaching device to help him become a better player and to help us build a better management team. We must make sure that he knows that too. We can start by

emphasizing that we are not trying to judge him as a person, but are gauging his performance in relation to the requirements of his position. This idea can be developed so that he will almost feel

that he can look at his own work as though it were another man's performance and not his own that is being judged. The more we can maintain this objective attitude, the more we can accomplish in the appraisal interview. We can also help to build this attitude by recognizing with him

that none of us is perfect and that we all have our weaknesses. With this kind of introduction

to establish a friendly, relaxed, yet businesslike, atmosphere, we are ready to take up the actual points of our appraisal of the man's performance in his job. However,

We will probably want to take up the points in a different order for each individual so that we will begin with some of his strongest points. By first recognizing his high degree of initiative, for example,

and giving him whatever praise he merits for a recent example of that quality, we will further convince him that our appraisal is objective, honest and friendly. Then

when we come to some of his weaknesses he will be more willing to accept criticism and recognize his shortcomings. Of course,

our criticism should not be a matter of personal accusation and blame but a judicial recognition of facts, and when our appraisal is critical of a man's performance,

it is especially important for us to listen to what he has to say. Even though our evaluation is perfectly correct,

he will accept the appraisal more willingly if he feels that he has had a fair hearing. Furthermore,

what he says about his shortcomings - the reasons, or excuses, or explanations he may offer - will probably give us more insight into his problem so that we can help him plan his own improvement. After all,

they are his shortcomings that he must improve if we are going to have a winning team. To be sure, in spite of all the care we may take,

become excited and emotional when faced with any kind of criticism. Even if this should happen,

we must control our natural reactions and remain calm and objective. There is nothing else we could do that would do any good at this point. If we allowed ourselves

to be drawn into an argument it would only make things worse. An angry or excited person cannot be influenced by logic or reasoning, but

if we can manage to keep cool and calm until he has talked himself out, then we can resume a reasonable discussion of his problems. Naturally this kind of reaction is not one we would ordinarily expect, but we must be prepared to meet it if it ever arises.

Even in a normally quiet appraisal interview we must be careful not to enter into any discussion that involves

the performance or appraisal of others. If our subordinate introduces such comparisons we can remind him that we are not comparing or appraising people

but are appraising his performance in relation to the requirements of his position, and that other people's performance will be appraised in relation to the requirements of their positions.

As we discuss the weaknesses shown by our evaluation we should try to make constructive suggestions that will help our subordinate to improve his performance,

and we should encourage and make note of any suggestions that he can offer for his own improvement. This has the double advantage of getting his acceptance of the criticism and stimulating him to do something

about it himself.

It may be well to save one or two favorable points of our review until the end of our discussion so that we can conclude the interview with some further praise and encouragement. In any case,

we will want to summarize the appraisal and emphasize again that it is a coaching device that we are using for the development of the player and of the team, and point out that it will lead

to an individual development plan designed to assist him in making the most of his own abilities. Then by reviewing

the four stages of the Management Development Program:

1. Personal History
2. Position Description
3. Performance Appraisal
4. Individual Development Plan

and showing that we are now in the third phase,

we can end the interview on a strong and friendly note of constructive action toward development of a winning team.

When the interview is over the Performance Appraisal Form provides space for us to record the man's reactions while they are fresh in mind. These notes will be very valuable to us for reference before making his next appraisal,

and such notes will also be helpful in working out his individual development plan when we come to the next step in the Management Development Program. As we consider

this interview we can see that the Management Development Program gives us a definite, businesslike occasion for the overall praise and constructive criticism that we may not find opportunity to give our subordinates from day to day. Naturally,

we will want to continue giving a pat on the back when a man does a notably good job and suggesting improvements when work is not up to par. But since these day-to-day occasions are subject to chance, the appraisal interview enables us

to make corrections and give constructive criticisms before things reach such a point that we find it difficult to remain objective and helpful in our criticism, and the same interview also enables us

to show our recognition and appreciation of the good work without waiting to throw a ceremonial dinner. As we look back

at the course of this appraisal interview, we realize that our successful use of the appraisal as a coaching tool is the result of careful preparation for each interview with each individual subordinate.

Before discussing our evaluations with the individual we have reviewed the reasons for our judgments in the light of the man's position requirements. We have made sure that both of us will have the time and place to discuss the evaluation privately and calmly, and

we have outlined the points we want to cover in appropriate order. Of course, our outline will be adapted and filled in differently for each individual according to the observations and judgments we have made in each case. This is the kind of preparation that leads

to a successful appraisal interview. Here we have a man who knows what is expected of him, knows where he stands, and has a well-founded determination to improve himself and make the most of his ability, and here we also have

a supervisor who knows that he has fulfilled his responsibilities to his subordinate, to his company and to himself. He has made a careful appraisal of the man's performance and they have reviewed it thoroughly. Now they are ready to work together

through the Management Development Program

for the development of the individual, the player on the team, under the guidance of his supervisor, the coach,

to build a winning team. For in industry, as in football, championships are won by performance on the field,

and successful managers are those who have become expert in coaching the management team.